

ty, saying, that since they were at present free, they would never consent to their becoming slaves: on which the ambassadors threatened them with war and departed.

*Craesus*, being informed that the *Samians* were inclined to become tributary to him, till *Æsop* by speaking only a few words had diverted them from this resolution, sent to make them a proposal; that if they would send *Æsop* to him, he would for the present put a stop to his arms. This proposal being made to *Æsop*, he replied that he was not against their sending him, provided they would suffer him first to tell them a short story. 'There once happened, said he, a fierce war between the wolves and the sheep; when the sheep by the help of the dogs, had the advantage. Upon this the wolves made a proposal of peace to the sheep, on condition that they might have their dogs for hostages. To this the credulous sheep agreed, but no sooner had they parted with their dogs, than the wolves broke in upon them, and destroyed them at pleasure.' The moral of this fable was immediately understood by the *Samians*, who unanimously cried

cried out, that they would not part with *Æsop*, and with this answer the Ambassadors were dismissed.

*Æsop* now went voluntarily on board the Ambassador's ship, and attended them to *Lydia*. On his arrival at the court of *Craesus*, he presented himself before that prince, who looking upon him with contempt and indignation, 'Was it this wretch, said he, that hindered me from being master of *Samos*?' *Æsop* then advancing with great humility, said, 'I am not here, O King! in the character of a man delivered up by his country: I am come voluntarily to your court, and no compulsion has been used to make me lay myself at your majesty's feet. I have only one request to make, that you will condescend to grant me the honour of your royal ear, for a few words.'

'A boy once hunting of grasshoppers, had the fortune to catch one, when the little animal, finding he was about to kill her, thus pleaded for her life. Alas! said she, I never did any one an injury, and never had either inclination or power to do it. All my business is my song, what